

Public Testimony to the Appropriations Subcommittee of Higher Education on Governor's
Proposed FY 2024-2025 Budget, H.B. 6659
In support of restoring Connecticut Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) funding

Wednesday, February 15, 2022

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Berthel, Representative Nuccio, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Linda Richard RN, a health science educator at the Waterbury Career Academy High School. I can attest to the value that AHEC has added to my students. Beginning in 2013, I reached out to NW AHEC to inquire about community experiences available for my students. Within a week, AHEC had set up and supported my students in several opportunities in Waterbury. My partnership with AHEC has expanded from after school Youth Health Service program to Public Health Ambassador Training and we are currently in conversation to train Community Health Workers for the city of Waterbury. For the past 21 years the Connecticut AHEC Network has successfully leveraged collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders with a focus on Connecticut's health care workforce. They have been dedicated and committed to reducing and eliminating health disparities by collaborating and creating partnerships with organizations that aim to improve healthcare access both on a national and statewide level.

Unfortunately, Governor Lamont's budget proposal removes Connecticut Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) direct funding, and along with it hinders their ability to continue supporting communities to thrive. I ask that you restore AHEC line in the budget so that they can continue support healthcare workforce development in the state.

Sincerely,

Linda Richard RN, BSN MA
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